

AMENDMENT

Amendments to the Claims: Please replace all prior versions and listings of claims with the following listing of claims.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for issuing refunds for misprints of determining whether to refund postage of the United States Postal Service (USPS) mail pieces, comprising:

generating, at a postage-issuing computer system, a unique postage indicium in response to receiving a request for a postage transaction, wherein the unique postage indicium contains a unique tracking identifier that provides a mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

storing information for [[a]] the postage transaction relating to a mailpiece in a database coupled to the postage-issuing computer system, wherein the information stored for the postage transaction information comprising a USPS includes the unique tracking [[ID]] identifier that provides the mail piece [[for]] tracking capability within the USPS and an a delivery status associated status with the unique tracking identifier;

retrieving the information stored for the postage transaction from the database in response to the postage-issuing computer system receiving a postage refund inquiry for a refund from the USPS, the refund being for the postage of the mailpiece transaction, wherein the information retrieved for the postage transaction from the database includes the delivery status associated with the unique tracking identifier; and

refunding retrieving the postage transaction information from the database in response to the postage refund inquiry to determine whether to refund the postage associated with the postage refund inquiry, wherein the postage is refunded based on the delivery status associated with the unique USPS tracking ID contained within the retrieved postage transaction information identifier.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying the information retrieved for the postage transaction information from the database at the postage-issuing computer system in response to the refund inquiry for the postage transaction.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with the unique tracking identifier [[ID]] from the USPS, wherein the confirmatory delivery status information indicates whether the USPS has delivered a mail piece carrying the unique tracking identifier; and
updating the delivery status associated with the unique tracking identifier in the database with the confirmatory delivery status information received from the USPS.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the information stored for the postage transaction information further comprises includes a postage transaction date and the unique postage indicium for the postage transaction.
6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the information stored for the postage transaction information further comprises includes a postage transaction date, postage transaction a time, a destination zip code, a service class, a postage amount, and a mail piece weight, and the unique postage indicium for the postage transaction.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~postage~~ refund inquiry is received from an account administrator that operates a user interface at the postage-issuing computer system.
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~postage~~ refund inquiry is received from an end user computer over a communications links connecting the end user computer with the postage-issuing computer system.

10-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~ wherein refunding the postage transaction based on the delivery status includes:

refunding the postage transaction in response to determining that the delivery retrieved status associated with the unique tacking identifier indicates that the USPS has not delivered a mail piece carrying associated with the unique USPS tracking ID has been delivered identifier; and

denying the postage refund inquiry in response to determining that the delivery status associated with the unique tacking identifier indicates that the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the unique tracking identifier.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

~~applying the tracking ID to a mail piece;~~

receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with the unique tracking identifier from the USPS in response to the USPS processing a the mail piece through carrying the USPS unique tracking identifier and reading the unique tracking identifier carried on the mail piece; and

~~reading the tracking ID on the mail piece; and~~

updating the delivery status associated with the unique tracking identifier to indicate that the USPS has delivered the mail piece has been delivered carrying the unique tracking identifier.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13, ~~further comprising not~~ wherein refunding the postage transaction based on the delivery status includes:

refunding the postage transaction in response to determining that the updated delivery status associated with the unique tacking identifier indicates that the USPS has not delivered the mail piece carrying the unique tracking identifier; and

denying the refund inquiry in response to determining that the updated delivery status associated with the unique tacking identifier indicates that the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the unique tracking identifier.

15. **(Currently Amended)** A method for issuing refunds for misprints of refunding postage of the United States Postal Service (USPS) mail pieces, comprising:

generating, at a postage-issuing computer system, a first unique postage indicium in response to receiving a first request for a first postage transaction, wherein the first unique postage indicium contains a first unique tracking identifier that provides a mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

storing information for a plurality of the first postage transactions transaction in a database coupled to the postage-issuing computer system, wherein the information stored for each the first postage transaction comprising a USPS includes the first unique tracking [[ID]] identifier that provides the mail piece [[for]] tracking capability within the postal system USPS, a first date for the first postage transaction date, and a first delivery status associated with the USPS first unique tracking [[ID]] identifier;

generating, at the postage-issuing computer system, a second unique postage indicium in response to receiving a second request for a second postage transaction, wherein the second unique postage indicium contains a second unique tracking identifier that provides the mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

storing information for the second postage transaction in the database, wherein the information stored for the second postage transaction includes the second unique tracking identifier that provides the mail piece tracking capability within the USPS, a second date for the second postage transaction, and a second delivery status associated with the second unique tracking identifier;

associating the information stored for the first postage transaction and the information stored for the second postage transaction with a user account at the postage-issuing computer system;

~~receiving a postage refund inquiry from the user account, the postage refund inquiry requesting the refund from the USPS;~~

retrieving the information stored for the first postage transaction ~~information~~ from the database in response to the postage-issuing computer system receiving a refund inquiry for the first postage transaction, wherein the information retrieved for the first postage transaction from the database includes the first delivery status associated with the first unique tracking identifier and the first date for the first postage transaction; and

refunding the ~~postage for a first postage transaction only if in response to determining that the first delivery status for associated with the first unique tracking identifier postage transaction indicates that a mail piece associated with the USPS tracking ID for the first postage transaction has not been delivered~~[[,]] a mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier and that the first date for the first postage transaction dates for is the same as the first and second date for the second postage transactions are the same transaction.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15,

wherein the information ~~for each~~ stored for the first postage transaction further includes comprises a first destination zip code, a first service class, and a first postage amount, and the first unique postage indicium for the first postage transaction; and

wherein the information stored for the second postage transaction further includes a second destination zip code, a second service class, a second postage amount, and the second unique postage indicium for the second postage transaction; and

wherein the first postage transaction is refunded only [[if]] in response to further determining that the first destination zip codes code, the first service classes class, and the first postage amounts amount for the first and second postage transaction are the same as the second destination zip code, the second service class, and the second postage amount for the second postage transaction.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with one or more of the plurality of USPS first unique tracking ID's identifier or the second unique identifier from the USPS, wherein the confirmatory delivery status information indicates whether the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier or another mail piece carrying the second unique tracking identifier; and

updating one or more of the first delivery status associated with the first unique tracking identifier or the second delivery status associated with the second unique tracking identifier plurality of statuses in the database with the confirmatory delivery status information received from the USPS.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[17]]~~ 15, further comprising:

receiving wherein the confirmatory delivery status information associated with the first unique tracking identifier is received from the USPS in response to the USPS processing the mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier and reading the first unique tracking identifier carried on the mail piece; and

updating the first delivery status associated with the first unique tracking identifier to indicate that the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein the postage refund inquiry is received from an account administrator that operates a user interface at the postage-issuing computer system.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein the postage refund inquiry is received from an end user computer associated with the user account over a communications links connecting the end user computer with the postage-issuing computer system.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim ~~[[15]]~~ 18, further comprising:
~~applying the plurality of USPS tracking ID's to a plurality of mail pieces;~~
receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with the second unique identifier from the USPS in response to the USPS processing the plurality of another mail piece carrying pieces through the USPS second unique tracking identifier and reading the second unique tracking identifier carried on the other mail piece; and
~~reading the USPS tracking ID on a mail piece; and~~
updating the second delivery confirmatory status associated with the second unique tracking identifier information to indicate that the USPS has plurality of mail pieces have been delivered the other mail piece carrying the second unique tracking identifier.
22. **(Currently Amended)** The method of claim ~~[[21]]~~ 15, further comprising:
denying not refunding the postage refund inquiry in response to determining that the first delivery status associated with the first unique tracking identifier indicates that the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier; and
denying the refund inquiry in response to determining that the first date for the first postage transaction and the second date for the second postage transaction are different.
23. **(Currently Amended)** A method ~~of providing status for issuing refunds for misprints a plurality of mail pieces tracked by the United States Postal Service (USPS) and determining whether to refund postage,~~ comprising:
generating, at a postage-issuing computer system, a first unique postage indicium in response to receiving a first request for a first postage transaction, wherein the first unique postage indicium contains a first unique tracking identifier that provides a mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);
storing information for a plurality of the first postage transactions transaction in a database coupled to the postage-issuing computer system, wherein the information stored for each the first postage transaction comprising a USPS includes the first unique tracking [[ID]] identifier that provides the mail piece [[for]] tracking capability within the USPS, a first date for

the first postage transaction, a first destination zip code for the first postage transaction, a first postage amount for the first postage transaction, and [[an]] a first delivery status associated status with the first unique tracking identifier;

receiving confirmatory status information from the USPS;

updating the plurality of statuses in the database with the confirmatory status information;

generating, at the postage-issuing computer system, a second unique postage indicium in response to receiving a second request for a second postage transaction, wherein the second unique postage indicium contains a second unique tracking identifier that provides the mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

storing information for the second postage transaction in the database, wherein the information stored for the second postage transaction includes the second unique tracking identifier that provides the mail piece tracking capability within the USPS, a second date for the second postage transaction, a second destination zip code for the second postage transaction, a second postage amount for the second postage transaction, and a second delivery status associated with the second unique tracking identifier;

receiving a postage refund inquiry for a refund from the USPS;

searching the database for ~~duplicative~~ the information stored for the first postage transactions associated with transaction and the information stored for the second postage transaction in response to the postage-issuing computer system receiving a refund inquiry identifying one of, wherein the first postage transaction or the second postage transaction;

identifying the first postage transaction and the second postage transactions as duplicative postage transactions ~~include identical transaction dates~~ in response to determining that the first date, the first destination zip codes code, and the first postage amounts amount for the first postage transaction are respectively identical to the second date, the second destination zip code, and the second postage amount for the second postage transaction; and

refunding the postage transaction identified in associated with the postage refund inquiry in response to [[if]] the first delivery status for and the second delivery status indicating that the USPS has delivered a mail piece carrying only one of the first unique tracking identifier

or the second unique tracking identifier associated with the duplicative postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, further comprising associating the information stored for the first postage transaction and the information stored for the second postage transaction with a plurality of one or more user accounts at the postage-issuing computer system.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23,
wherein the information stored for the first ~~for each~~ postage transaction further ~~comprises~~ includes a first postage transaction date, postage transaction time, destination zip code, a first service class, postage amount, and a first mail piece weight, and the first unique postage indicium for the first postage transaction; and

wherein the information stored for the second postage transaction further includes a second time, a second service class, a second mail piece weight, and the second unique postage indicium for the second postage transaction.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 23, further comprising:

receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with applying the first unique plurality of USPS tracking ID's identifier from the USPS in response to the USPS processing the a plurality of mail pieces piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier and reading the first unique tracking identifier carried on the mail piece;

updating processing the plurality of mail pieces through first delivery status associated with the first unique tracking identifier to indicate that the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier;

receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with the second unique identifier from the USPS in response to the USPS processing another mail piece carrying the

second unique tracking identifier and reading the plurality of USPS second unique tracking ID's identifier carried on the plurality of other mail pieces piece; and

updating the ~~confirmatory~~ second delivery status information associated with the second unique tracking identifier to indicate that the USPS has plurality of mail pieces have been delivered the other mail piece carrying the second unique tracking identifier; and

denying the refund inquiry in response to updating the first delivery status and the second delivery status to indicate that the USPS has delivered the mail piece carrying the first unique tracking identifier and the other mail piece carrying the second unique tracking identifier.

28. (Currently Amended) A ~~centralized postage-issuing computer~~ system for issuing refunds providing status for misprints a plurality of mail pieces tracked by the United States Postal Service (USPS) and refunding postage, comprising:

data processing circuitry;

a database coupled to a postage-issuing computer system;

a communications link connecting module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for receiving confirmatory status information from postage-issuing computer system with an end user computer;

a master tracking computer system connected to the postage-issuing computer system through the communications link; and

data processing circuitry that executes on the postage-issuing computer system, wherein executing the data processing circuitry on the postage-issuing computer system causes the postage-issuing computer system to:

generate a plurality of unique postage indicia in response to receiving a plurality of requests for a plurality of postage transactions, wherein each of the plurality of unique postage indicia contain respective unique tracking identifiers that provide a mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

store a database management module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for storing information for a the plurality of postage transactions in

a the database, wherein the information stored for each of the plurality of postage transactions includes the respective unique transaction comprising a USPS tracking ID for identifiers that provide the mail piece tracking capability within the USPS and respective delivery statuses an associated status, the database management module further configured for updating the status with confirmatory status information the respective unique tracking identifiers;

retrieve the information stored for the plurality of postage transactions from the database in response to receiving a duplicative postage transaction inquiry;

identify two or more of a filtering module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for selecting the plurality of postage transactions as duplicative postage transactions in response to determining that which the respective unique one or more postage indicia and unique tracking identifiers for the duplicative postage transactions transaction items are identical, and determining if any of the statuses for the selected postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered with one another; and

determine wherein, if the filter module determines that any of the respective unique postage indicia associated with one or more of delivery statuses for the duplicative selected postages transactions have not indicates that a mail piece has been used in response to delivered, the respective delivery statuses associated database management module credits a user account with the one or more duplicative [[a]] postage transactions indicating that refund from the USPS has not delivered a mail piece carrying the identical unique tracking identifier associated with the one or more duplicative postage transactions.

29. (Currently Amended) The centralized postage-issuing computer system of claim 28, wherein executing further comprising a status request module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for generating a on the postage-issuing computer system further causes the postage-issuing computer system to:

request for the confirmatory delivery status information, wherein associated with one or more of the respective unique tracking identifiers from communications module is further configured for transmitting the request to the master tracking computer system;

receive the requested confirmatory delivery status information associated with the one or more respective unique tracking identifiers from the master tracking computer system, wherein the confirmatory delivery status information indicates whether the USPS has delivered one or more mail pieces carrying the one or more respective unique tracking identifiers; and

updating the delivery statuses associated with the one or more respective unique tracking identifiers in the database with the confirmatory delivery status information received from the master tracking computer system.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~centralized postage-issuing computer~~ system of claim 28, wherein executing the data processing circuitry on the postage-issuing computer system database management module is further causes the postage-issuing computer system to associate configured for associating the stored postage transaction information stored for the plurality of postage transactions with a plurality of one or more user accounts.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~centralized postage-issuing computer~~ system of claim 28, wherein the information stored for each of the plurality of postage transactions transaction further includes respective dates and the respective unique postage indicia for each of the plurality of comprises a postage transaction date transactions.

32. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~centralized postage-issuing computer~~ system of claim 28, wherein the information stored for each of the plurality of postage transactions transaction further comprises a postage transaction date includes respective dates, postage transaction time respective times, respective destination zip code codes, respective service class classes, respective postage amount amounts, and respective mail piece weight weights and the respective unique postage indicia for each of the plurality of postage transactions.

33. (Currently Amended) A method for issuing refunds for misprints of determining whether issued postage has been used within the United States Postal Service (USPS) and refunding postage mail pieces, comprising:

generating, at a postage-issuing computer system, a plurality of unique postage indicia in response to receiving a plurality of requests for a plurality of postage transactions, wherein each of the plurality of unique postage indicia contain respective unique tracking identifiers that provide a mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

storing information for [[a]] the plurality of postage transactions in a database coupled to the postage-issuing computer system, wherein the information stored for each of the plurality of postage transactions includes the respective unique transaction comprising one or more postage transaction items, a USPS tracking ID for identifiers that provide the mail piece tracking capability within the USPS and [[an]] respective delivery statuses associated status with the respective unique tracking identifiers;

associating the postage transaction information with a user account;

receiving an inquiry for duplicative postage transactions;

retrieving the postage transaction information stored for the plurality of postage transactions from the database in response to the postage-issuing computer system receiving a duplicative postage transaction inquiry;

identifying two or more of selecting the plurality of postage transactions as duplicative postage transactions in response to determining that which the respective unique one or more postage indicia and unique tracking identifiers for the duplicative postage transactions transaction items are identical with one another; and

determining that if any of the respective unique postage indicia associated with one or more of the duplicative postage transactions have not been used in response to the respective delivery statuses associated with for the one or more duplicative selected postage transactions indicates indicating that the USPS has not delivered a mail piece has been delivered; and

issuing a postage refund from carrying the identical unique tracking identifier associated with USPS if any of the statuses for the one or more duplicative selected postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising displaying the selected information stored for the duplicative postage transactions [[to]] at the USPS postage-issuing computer system in response to the duplicative postage transaction inquiry.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising ~~determining that~~ refunding the one or more duplicative issued postage transactions associated with the is ~~unused unique if the any statuses for the selected postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered~~ indicia.

36. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising displaying the postage transaction information stored for the selected plurality of postage transactions at the postage-issuing computer system in response to the duplicative postage transaction inquiry.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the information stored for each of the plurality of one or more postage transaction items comprises a postage transaction date transactions further includes respective dates, respective destination zip code codes, respective service class classes, and respective postage amount amounts, and the respective unique postage indicia for each of the plurality of postage transactions.

38. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising:
receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with one or more of the respective unique tracking identifiers from the USPS, wherein the confirmatory delivery status information indicates whether the USPS has delivered one or more mail pieces carrying the one or more respective unique tracking identifiers; and

updating the delivery statuses associated with the one or more respective unique tracking identifiers in the database with the confirmatory delivery status information.

39. (Cancelled)

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, wherein the duplicative postage transaction inquiry is received from an account administrator that operates a user interface at the postage-issuing computer system.

41. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 38, wherein the duplicative postage transaction inquiry is received from an end user computer over a communications links connecting the end user computer with the postage-issuing computer system.

42. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[38]]~~ 33, further comprising:
~~applying the plurality of USPS tracking ID's to a plurality of mail pieces;~~
~~processing the plurality of mail pieces through the USPS;~~
receiving confirmatory delivery status information associated with one or more of the
respective unique tracking identifiers from the USPS in response to the USPS processing the
one or more mail pieces carrying the one or more respective unique tracking identifiers and
reading the one or more unique plurality of USPS tracking ID's identifiers carried on the
plurality of respective mail pieces; and

updating the respective delivery statuses associated with the one or more unique
tracking identifiers confirmatory status information to indicate that the USPS has delivered the
respective plurality of mail pieces have been delivered carrying the one or more unique
tracking identifiers.

43. (Cancelled)

44. (Currently Amended) The A ~~centralized postage-issuing computer system for~~
~~determining whether issued postage has been used within the United States Postal Service~~
~~(USPS) of claim 28, comprising:~~

~~data processing circuitry;~~

~~a database;~~

~~a communications module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for receiving an inquiry for duplicative postage transactions; and~~

~~a database management module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for storing information for a plurality of postage transactions in a database, the information for each postage transaction comprising one or more transaction items, a USPS tracking ID for tracking capability within the postal system and an associated status, the database management module further configured for associating the postage transaction information with a user account; and~~

~~a filtering module, when executed by the data processing circuitry, configured for selecting the postage transactions in which the one or more postage transaction items are identical, and determining if any of the statuses for the selected postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered;~~

~~wherein executing the data processing circuitry on the postage-issuing computer system further causes the postage-issuing computer system database management module is configured to credit a user account with a postage refund from the USPS if the filter module determines that any of the statuses for the selected postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered, and the filtering module is configured to filter out [[a]] the refunded postage transactions from the selected duplicative postage transactions so that to prevent the refunded filtered postage transactions from receiving transaction is not refunded multiple times refunds.~~

45. (Currently Amended) The ~~centralized postage-issuing computer system of claim [[44]] 28~~, wherein executing the data processing circuitry on the postage-issuing computer system ~~filtering module is further~~ causes the postage-issuing computer system to refund the one or more duplicative configured for determining that issued postage transactions associated with the is unused unique if the any statuses for the selected postage transactions indicates that a mail piece has been delivered indicia.

46-47. (Cancelled)

48. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method of claim 1 ~~for issuing refunds for misprints of mail pieces, further~~ comprising:

generating, at a postage-issuing computer system, a unique postage indicium in response to receiving a request for a postage transaction, wherein the unique postage indicium contains a unique tracking identifier that provides a mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

retrieving information stored for if the postage transaction from a database coupled to the postage-issuing computer system in response to the postage-issuing computer system receiving a refund inquiry for the postage transaction is refunded, wherein the information retrieved for the postage transaction from the database includes a delivery status associated with the unique tracking identifier that provides the mail piece tracking capability within the United States Postal Service (USPS);

refunding the postage transaction in response to the delivery status indicating that the USPS has not delivered a mail piece carrying the unique tracking identifier;

checking for a change in the delivery status associated with the unique tracking identifier in response to refunding the postage transaction, wherein the postage-issuing computer system checks for the change in the delivery status during a period of time after the refund postage transaction has been refunded; and

if the status changes within the period of time, forwarding an alert to the USPS in response to the delivery status associated with the unique tracking identifier changing during the period of time after the postage transaction has been refunded.

49-54. (Cancelled)

55. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 48, ~~wherein comprising:~~

~~determining that the period of time comprises retrieved status indicates that a mail piece associated with the USPS tracking ID has not been delivered a predetermined number of days.~~

56. (Currently Amended) The method claim [[55]] 48, wherein ~~further comprising issuing the postage refund after the determination has been made~~ period of time comprises a predetermined number of months.